

Submission for Public Hearing, March 14, 2013 and March 15, 2013
Gun Safety Regulation

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Dear Committee Members,

This is to express my determined support for the proposed gun safety legislation. Clearly we are enduring a crisis in public safety and a public health epidemic. Over 90,000 Americans were shot last year, 31,000 deaths, over 3,000 children buried. I lost my daughter at the end of 2004 when she was 25 years old. I highlight this statement in gray because that is how you see things and feel things after a loss so devastating. She died of suicide using a gun that she was easily able to buy. Her writing told that she did not really want to die, but could not stand the pain any longer. She was actually asked if she owned a gun, when she had previously gone for help. According to her friends, and I have not had the courage to investigate myself, she was denied treatment and told that she was not sick enough!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! She told them at the clinic that she went to that she was suicidal! (...but, not at that moment, although she was worried about it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Nearly 300 will be shot today. We extravagantly regulate cars and toys, but not guns. There are limitations on all constitutional guarantees, (speech cannot be libelous or endanger others, or incite to riot), but continuous firearm carnage on our streets and now in our school classrooms and other places where the public gathers, is permissible??????? Certainly, enhanced civil and criminal penalties for non-compliance are necessary to afford any real measure of compliance!!! Think about it. This is not about the 2nd amendment. It is about protecting us from ourselves and from each other. I believe that the record will show that gun ownership has harmed or killed a great percentage of those that own them and or those who they regrettably and belatedly harmed or killed. I will never forget two best friends, one who

lived across the street from me and one who lived down the street from me, when they were 11 years old and I, still in elementary school myself, heard the horror of how they were **playing** with the rifle, it was loaded and it did kill one of the boys. In fact one boy killed his best friend with the best friend's father's rifle! Whose rights were violated here!

Most encouraging to me is the establishment of Gun Registry for all owners of any firearm in Raised Bill 1076. Such a registry is critical in the enforcement of gun trafficking laws in that it establishes a documented baseline of firearm ownership for use by lawful enforcement only. This registry is not subject to public disclosure and therefore it does not unlawfully infringe upon a gun owner's rights. Without such a registry, I believe that it is difficult, if not impossible to trace gun ownership in order to enforce existing laws that prohibit straw sales to those prohibited from lawfully acquiring guns with such a registry. Law enforcement at least has a record from which to trace ownership of guns used in crimes. The proposed background check is proposed for anyone applying for a firearm registration card gives real meaning to the entire proposal.

The proposed limitation on ammunition sales, should, however be limited to the firearm for which the purchaser has a permit. The proposed prohibited categories for those who are disqualified from receiving a rifle, pistol or revolver permit or an eligibility certificate and registry for offenders convicted of any gun offense are clearly necessary to at least eliminate the most dangerous ownership and Committee Bill 506's age 21 rifle permit limit simply contemplates reasonable maturity.

Support of Criminal Injuries Compensation Funding taxing firearm manufacturing and importers for each gun sold or imported into Connecticut finally recognizes that the industry's income has costly consequences. **We all pay taxes to smoke and drink alcohol, even to drink milk, among other things. We pay taxes to buy a car and even to own a car every year. If I went on with this, the list would be too long to read, but the idea is clear.**

Committee Bill 506's requirement of criminal background checks for all firearm sales at long last closes the most graphic loophole in regulation and is necessary if we are to have an effective legislative scheme which is

similarly true of Committee Bill 625's required fingerprinting and criminal background checks for long gun sales; Raised Bill 659's prohibition of international discharge of any firearm within 500 feet of any residence without owner permission relates to both public safety and nuisance.

In short, this legislative package is a long overdue beginning to restore public safety to Connecticut and quell the epidemic of fear and violence which has plagued our cities. I greatly look forward to further legislation in this area.

I want to leave you with some things that I have heard from staunch gun rights and 2nd amendment rights proponents when engaged in discussion with me.

Although I was unaware that my friend's husband always had a loaded gun within reach at his home and when he went out, so that he could protect himself against would be intruders, etc., my friend told me that he put it in the bedroom when I was visiting. She had been against this, and, in fact had been threatened by him once when he had been upset about something, but nevertheless, because of her belief that her 2nd amendment right was now in jeopardy because of what happened in Newtown and the "unrestrained talk about gun control, she determined to go out and get a gun. This she did, legally, with all the training at the shooting range and whatever else was required. She did buy a gun and has a permit to use. She also stated that she should have bought a "long gun" or whatever kind of gun it is that you do not need a permit for!!!!!!!!!!!!!! We are still friends, as she has many other wonderful qualities and I value her friendship in many ways. I have to hope that her qualities of compassion and love and caring, and reason, will out, in spite of her flawed speculation on the gun issue, unfortunately a decision that could end in a horrible wrong.

Recently, I spoke with someone who was essentially a stranger to me, while in a resale shop where he and others were looking at an old rifle. A discussion ensued. Basically, the merits of guns, the workmanship and any other attributes, including how they handled, loaded, and so on were being addressed. The man's wife was also in the store. I was surprised to learn that they had young children, but still a loaded gun was within reach available when at home and in the car. I asked him if he had ever felt

threatened enough to have to use it. He stated that where he lived in Connecticut and that wasn't far from where I live, and I do have friends and acquaintances that live there, had a lot of robberies and crime! Okay, but did you ever feel compelled to use that gun that was within reach and loaded? Well, once, when someone who was driving, did something that threatened me. I was going to use it, but I used restraint, is what he told me.

Another conversation that I had with a gun enthusiast told me that he needed the gun for protection. I asked him who he needed to protect himself against. He answered, that it was his neighbors and those around him. He tried to say, not my neighbors, really, but couldn't really articulate just who was a threat to him.

These are law abiding citizens who think that they are correct in their positions!!! As strong as their convictions are, mine are stronger!!!

The people that I am afraid of are the people with the guns!

Respectfully,

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